THE NINTH DAY.

27th February 1918.

The Assembly met at 11-45 A. M. on Wednesday, the 27th February 1918.

IX.—MISCELLANEOUS.—(*Continued*).

143. Desirability of allowing adequate representation to the various communities in the Public Service.

Mr. P. Jacob Kurian (Member, Mavelikara Taluk) said Travancore had no serious politics, except the public service, to discuss. There were two divisions, *viz.* the privileged class of 8 lakhs of people, and the disabled class of 26 lakhs composed of Ezhavas, Muslims, Christians, &c., who were not allowed any share in the Revenue branch of the State service. The three reasons urged were (1) that this was a Hindu State and the Government a Hindu Government, (2) that the State was dedicated to Sri Padmanabhaswamy and (3) that the Devaswoms were incorporated with the Revenue Department. In regard to the first argument, the Member submitted that the major portion of the population was non-Hindu. As His Highness the Maha Raja was the Sovereign of all his subjects, the argument that the State was a Hindu State would not hold. The second reason could not be accepted, because the Ezhavas, who were also Hindus, were placed on the same footing as the non-Hindus in respect of admission into the Revenue Department. Further, when the State was dedicated to Sri Padmanabhaswamy, there was also a Christian population in the State. Thus, no invidious distinction would ever have been intended to be shown in respect of Christians or Mahomedans. With reference to the third argument, the Member said that Christians were employed in the Devaswom Department till 1036 M. E. There was no proclamation or rule prohibiting the admission of Christians. If the incorporation of Devaswoms with the Revenue Department was a stumbling block to the employment of the 26 lakhs of His Highness' subjects, the only course open was to separate the Revenue from the Devaswom Department. The Member also submitted that the establishment of a common test for appointments would bring contentment, peace and prosperity to all His Highness' subjects.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

144. Suggestions for the further development of representative institutions.

Mr. P. V. Verghese B. A., L. T. (Member, Nominated) submitted that the Town Improvement Committees should have a wider scope of work so that the people might slowly and gradually be trained in the administration of their own affairs. They were now confined to looking after sanitation which was being done even before the Committees came into existence. Medical aid, road-making, &c., should be undertaken by the Committees. The Committees should also make provision for feeding and housing the helpless poor afflicted with contagious diseases. In fact, there should be one poor-house in every town.

In regard to the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, the principle of election should admit of communal representation. The qualifying minimum tax should be reduced from Rs. 50 in the case of Christians. The Members of the Assembly should have the power of passing resolutions after discussion of general subjects.

The Legislative Council should also be re-constituted on the following lines :—

(*a*) There should be an elected majority of Members.

(*b*) The Legislative Council should have full control of the finances of the state except certain specified heads, such as Devaswoms.

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The Member also suggested the formation of an Executive Council of five Members with the Dewan as President, two-fifths of the Members being non-official elected Members.

Dean's reply.—Noted.

145. Formation of Taluk Boards.

Mr. V. Ramakrishna Panikkar (Member, T. I. C., Haripad) said that, in 1087, there were Education Boards. They ceased to exist because of defective organization. They had been now revived under the name of Educational Service Committees. Though nothing tangible had been achieved by them till now, those Committees were useful in providing buildings for schools, maintaining and repairing them, inducing people to send their children to schools and watching the work and private conduct of teachers who should be living examples to the pupils. The clamour for schools was on the increase and the expenditure on education was also going up. That being so, it would be well to constitute Boards for at least the Lower Grade Vernacular schools.

There was a good deal of work to be done under Agriculture which could be carried out by an organised body.

Under public works and sanitation also, much useful work could be done. Every year, Members of the Assembly had been representing the necessity for roads, bridges, buildings and other public works. It was impossible for Government to accede to all those requests.

The *Tadasthars* in the various *pakuthies* would be of great use in the administration of Civil and Criminal Justice.

For public works of the kind referred to above, it was highly necessary to form District, Taluk and Pakuthi Boards and also levy a local cess. There should be at least two non-official Members for each *pakuthi* on the Taluk Board, the Tahsildar being made President.

Dewan's reply.—The suggestions of the Member will receive careful consideration in connection with the contemplated legislation for Taluk Boards.

146. Want of uniformity in the unit of grain measure in Nanjanad.

Mr. M. Sivathanu Pillai (Member, Agastiswaram Taluk) said that, in the rules under the Weights and Measures Regulation, dated 1st June 1912, it was declared that a Nanjanad *marakkal* was equivalent to 4·4583 *edangalies*. A *kotta* had been held to be equivalent to 9 *paras* and $3\frac{5}{8}$ *edangalies* according to the standard settlement *para*. The adoption of the above rates worked hardship on the Nanjanad ryots. The original equivalent of the *kotta* in Nanjanad was 9 *paras* and $3\frac{5}{8}$ *edangalies* according to the *vengalapara*. The cubical contents of a *vengalapara* were, according to the Member, 640 cubic inches. At the Settlement, however, the standard unit, namely, an *edangali* of 80 cubic inches, was presumably intended to apply to Nanjanad as well. A *kotta* was recognized in all Government transactions as equivalent to 9 *paras* and $3\frac{5}{8}$ *edangalies* the *para* being fixed at 800 cubic inches by Royal Proclamation. In 1906, the grain tax was abolished and Dewan Mr. Madhava Rao's commutation scheme came into force with effect from 1st Chingom 1082. The ryots of Nanjanad put in a petition to the Government praying for definite orders as to the rate at which the paddy tax paid by them should be converted into money under the G. O. abolishing payment in kind. The Government directed an enquiry into the matter as a result of which it was laid down in Government Order No. 15436/R6634, dated 13th September 1906, that 8 *paras* and $6\frac{1}{2}$ *edangalies* of the standard of 800 cubic inches per *para*, which was the equivalent of the smallest of the then existing *kottas*, should be adopted as the rate of conversion for commuting the paddy tax into money in the taluks of Tovala and Agastiswaram. The above arrangement was, however, not made applicable to the *Sripandaravagai* dues. Those dues had to be paid at the old equivalent of 9 *paras* and $3\frac{5}{8}$ *edangalies* per *kotta* according to the old *vengalapara*. The Member said that the above arrangement worked real hardship on the ryots especially in the matter of paying up the dues to the *Sripandaravagai*. For, according to the old practice, the ryots had only to pay at the rate of 9 *paras* and $3\frac{5}{8}$ *edangalies* per *para* of 640 cubic inches as the equivalent of

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